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19 July 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. ROBERT E. MATTHEW
Office of the Special Assistant to the President
for Disarmament

SUBJECT: Comments on Stassen letter

1. One of the questions raised by Governor Stassen in his letter of 11 May, requesting several national intelligence estimates, was as follows:

"If international inspectors are granted free access of movement within the Soviet Union and communication rights without interference to the exterior, to what degree could there be assurance against the launching of a surprise nuclear attack by the Soviet Union?"

2. Intelligence (as well as the radar early warning net) does now offer degrees of assurance against surprise attack. Such warning would presumably still be available in a period of controlled disarmament as an additional precaution against surprise attack. We have estimated the various periods of advance intelligence warning which can be expected in event of different scales of Soviet attack in NSR 11-6-55: Probable Intelligence Warning of Soviet Attack on the US Through MID-1958, dated 1 July 1955, which you received through regular dissemination.

3. Until the inspection features of Governor Stassen's proposals are spelled out more fully than the above, it will be difficult for us to make a more useful response to your question. A great deal would depend on the number and type of inspectors; the methods of inspection, the extent to which "international" inspector's reports would be available to the US, and numerous other factors. We can perhaps best serve you by deferring any further action on the warning question while you work out the detailed study of the inspection problem in accordance with recent NSC discussions. The factual intelligence data on which such a study depends was furnished you on 15 July.

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4. When this study progresses to the point where you can supply us with fairly precise ideas as to one or more schemes of inspection, we will be happy to have our estimators evaluate the degree of warning it would give of a surprise attack.



ROBERT AMES, JR.
Deputy Director/Intelligence

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